

HALFWAY THERE ... Dave Shannon in Trinity Square, behind the Eaton Centre, as his wheelchair tour arrived in Toronto yesterday, about midway through its cross-Canada crusade.



— Norm Betts, SUN

Wheelchair lawyer's crusade for hope

Rolling over all obstacles

By **MICHAEL CLEMENT**
Toronto Sun

Dave Shannon is living proof that there's no barrier that can't be overcome.

The 33-year-old lawyer rolled into Metro yesterday on his electric wheelchair, nearing the half-way point in a cross-Canada trip to promote awareness of issues faced by the disabled.

Shannon began his cross-country trip April 1 in St. John's, Nfld., in blowing snow and 60 km/h winds.

Yesterday, he rolled from Mel Lastman Square in North York to Trinity Square behind the Eaton Centre, where he was greeted by

Mayor Barbara Hall and former Liberal Leader Lyn McLeod.

"We can achieve our potential no matter who we are," Shannon said. "We know there is no barrier that can't be overcome."

Rugby accident

Shannon received his law degree from Dalhousie University in 1990, was called to the Ontario bar last year and has earned a master of laws degree from the London School of Economics.

He has been wheelchair-bound since 1981 when he broke his neck in a rugby tryout at the University of Waterloo.

Even 25 years ago, he said, his injury would have meant a nursing home. But technology has advanced to a point where he can make his cross-country trek.

"What Dave Shannon does is talk about ability and he explodes myths about disability," Hall said.

Shannon will be in Metro for several days before resuming his journey, which finishes in B.C. in October. After that, the Thunder Bay resident will return to practising law.

He appears in *The Puck*, his own one-man play, today at 12:12 p.m., 1:11 p.m. and 8 p.m. at Solar Stage Theatre, 40 King St. W.